

# House Armed Services Committee

## DEMOCRATS

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## Democrats Question Cuts to Navy Programs

*Washington D.C.—Today the House Armed Services Committee heard testimony from the Secretary of the Navy and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Democrats raised several issues including: concern with cuts in the size of our fleet and the need for careful partnership between Congress and the military to modernize our fleet.*

"If the Navy continues to build only four ships per year, as called for in this year's budget, and retires an aircraft carrier early, the current fleet size will not be sustainable for long," commented Ranking Member, **Ike Skelton** (MO). "I want to be sure that these decisions are driven by strategic realities and not by budget constraints. I don't need to tell you the oceans are vast, and quantity has a quality of its own."

"The Navy's request for reductions in several important shipbuilding programs will leave the United States well short of the size fleet needed to meet existing national security requirements," noted Rep. **Gene Taylor** (MS). "These cuts and other program cancellations are a reflection of the hidden costs of the war in Iraq. Unfortunately, the administration is resorting to short-term money fixes by cutting and canceling critical weapons programs."

"I intend to explore how best the Navy and DoD should wrestle to address future threats," said Rep. **Susan Davis** (CA). "As we approach this year's Quadrennial Defense Review I think the need to explore faster and more agile surface combatants is clear. Congress and the military must find a way to integrate our current platforms with more modern capabilities."

"As co-chair of the Electronic Warfare Working Group, I was pleased to hear that electronic warfare will be an integral part of the Navy's future," said Rep. **Rick Larsen** (WA). "In order to meet these needs, our Navy must continue developing advanced technology. Our electronic warfare assets will continue to play a vital role in the future and we must continue supporting them with necessary resources and funding."

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